

Girl Scouts 56th National Council Session Agenda

Overview

We are excited to share the agenda for the 56th National Council Session (NCS). Since the close of virtual NCS 2020, the NCS Advisory Team and National Board have collaborated with councils and delegates assessing Movement priorities to shape the agenda for NCS 2023. To prepare, we augmented the discussion topic and proposal submission process to add new outreach to gain insight from councils and NCS delegates including at the Fall 2023 National Board Chair and CEO meeting. Over 600 delegates responded to surveys providing feedback on topics for discussion, how discussions could be structured and NCS logistics. We provided education on how to propose agenda items and created an early submission process where councils could receive feedback on potential NCS proposals before the final submission deadline. We will continue to look for ways to involve delegates in shaping NCS throughout this process.

Delegates emphasized three themes. They want to 1) participate in strategic discussions to help guide the National Board’s thinking, 2) make important, strategic decisions using a formal process of debate followed by a vote, and 3) make the NCS experience more efficient as opposed to feeling administrative. This feedback was incorporated into our NCS agenda.

Overall Agenda

Beyond discussion topics and proposals for debate, the National Council will receive and consider reports from our CEO, National President, and Treasurer, as well as from the Credentials Report. It will also approve standing rules. Building on what worked well in 2020’s virtual NCS, some reports like the Stewardship Report will be provided in advance alongside opportunities to learn more about the proposed slate for the National Board and National Board Development Committees. The order of agenda items will be finalized as we get closer to NCS and is shaped by delegate feedback on which items may require more or less time for deliberation.

56th National Council Session & Convention

Monday 7/17	Tuesday 7/18	Wednesday 7/19	Thursday 7/20	Friday 7/21	Saturday 7/22	Sunday 7/23
Pre-Convention Optional Trips	2:00 PM	56th National Council Session	56th National Council Session	Phenom by Girl Scouts	Phenom by Girl Scouts	Post-Convention Optional Trips
	56th National Council Session		Phenom by Girl Scouts			

The NCS Advisory Team recommends use of a consent agenda after the adoption of the NCS 2023 standing rules. Similar to use by council boards and the National Board, a consent agenda can streamline deliberation on proposals where there is likely a large majority of delegate

support allowing more discussion time for other proposals. A decision on using a consent agenda will be made closer to NCS 2023.

We anticipate a meaningful 56th National Council Session as part of the broader 2023 Convention framework culminating in **Phenom By Girl Scouts**, which includes exciting experiences and programming in the Hall of Experiences, a National Bridging ceremony, Gold Award celebration, and much more. This convening will unite us around girl ambition, ability, and achievement. Our girl-centered focus will make our Movement stronger than ever.

Discussion Topics

One of the critical roles of the National Council is providing guidance to the National Board “upon general lines of direction of the Movement and program.” NCS agenda discussion topics are purposefully selected to highlight matters where we collectively – delegates, council leadership, and the National Board – will benefit from hearing multiple viewpoints, collecting feedback, etc. Additionally, discussion topics allow for dialogue in a less constrained format. This input informs both future delegate action during future National Council Sessions, as well as actions by the National Board on governance matters or GSUSA/council management teams on operational changes during the time between National Council Sessions. To gather more input from delegates and visitors, discussion topics may also be extended into the Hall of Experiences in the form of surveys, “chat areas”, etc.

NCS 2023 Discussion Topic: Democratic Process and Delegate Voice will provide input to improve our democratic process. Multiple councils submitted proposals related to Movement governance. This discussion topic will give delegates an opportunity to hear input more freely than within the narrow scope of proposal debate. Shaped by this discussion topic, a Movement Governance Advisory Team will be created to consider feedback and reflect on opportunities to strengthen and evolve our shared Movement governance. The Team will provide periodic updates to the National Board and delegates and may recommend practices for immediate action which do not require further deliberation by the National Council.

The discussion topic will be shaped by ideas put forth in several submitted proposals that are not on the NCS agenda including:

- Constitutional Amendment: Role of the National Council
- Constitutional Amendment: Frequency of National Council Sessions
- Ensuring the Importance and Effectiveness of the Democratic Process in the Movement
- Constitutional Amendment on Credentials and Amendment to Credentials Section

Proposals for Action

Proposals reflect the National Council Session's responsibility to act on proposals to foster and improve Girl Scouting and to amend the Constitution. Const. Art. V, Sec. 2. *These items will be considered for a delegate vote during the NCS.*

Allowing the possibility of virtual attendance for National Council Sessions and for Special Sessions of the National Council

This proposal would build on the 55th NCS held virtually in 2020 during the peak of the pandemic – the first ever virtual NCS. The proposal would build flexibility into our governing documents by amending the Constitution to allow for, but not require, virtual sessions which reflect a more efficient and agile meeting format.

Constitutional Amendment on the Timing of Delegate Allotment

This proposal would amend the Constitution to simplify the process for councils as they choose National Council delegates. Changing the date on which delegate allocations (calculated using council membership size) are based would allow councils to more efficiently plan for and select their delegates.

Constitutional Amendment Formula for Delegates

This proposal would create a Constitutional Amendment to help keep the number of delegates as close to 1,500 as possible while ensuring the number of delegates allocated to councils remains proportional to the council's girl membership.

Council Representation on the National Board

This proposal would require the composition of the National Board to include three council CEOs. Recognizing implementation complexities including the National Board Development Committee (NBDC) effort required to assess the capabilities, geographic representation, diversity, etc. needed for an effective Board slate and then identifying, cultivating, and screening candidates relative to these requirements, this proposal will include a 2026 effective date.

Amend the Girl Scout Promise and Law to use more potent, actionable language

The wording of our Promise and Law is deeply meaningful to Girl Scouts of all ages. This proposal provides the opportunity to debate and decide whether we should remove the words "try," "to," and "do my best."

DEIRJ Language Proposal

Girl Scouting remains dedicated to supporting diversity, equity, inclusion, and racial justice (DEIRJ). The Girl Scout Law affirms our commitment to being a sister to every Girl Scout. This proposal is an important step in our Movement's journey to become an anti-racist, inclusive organization. Inserting the word "anti-racist" in the Preamble to the Constitution would codify our commitment to racial equity in governing documents and would strengthen and refresh existing language that states, "Girl Scouts advance diversity and pluralism in our Movement and

in the communities in which we live." It would also support and propel existing DEIRJ efforts across the Movement.

Girl Scouts Gold Award Scholarship Fund

This proposal would fulfill the action taken by the National Council in 2020 and establish a donor-restricted fund that invests in the post-high school education of Gold Award Girl Scouts. In response to overwhelming delegate support for Gold Award Girl Scouts voiced during NCS 2020, the National Board has been proactively fundraising to ensure scholarships are available to girls who earn the highest award in Girl Scouting.

Topics Not Included on the Agenda

The NCS Advisory Team consults with councils and the National Board on proposal development, reviews submitted proposals, drafts other potential proposals, and provides agenda recommendations to the National Board. A large number of NCS discussion topics and proposals were received, which reflects our collective interest in Girl Scout governance. To ensure effective, efficient, and strategic use of our time onsite together at NCS, the National Board worked to carefully consider all feedback and the NCS Advisory Team's recommendation before determining the final agenda.

Some items were not included either because they lacked support, are operational in nature, can be considered by GSUSA management, or do not require NCS action to implement. These proposals include:

- Requiring councils to proactively share an intent to sell properties
- Update to Internet Sales Policy and Fundraising Methods
- Addition of a Girl Scout Adult "Young Alumna" Membership Category

Other suggested proposals relate to governance topics that are best addressed in combination with related proposals or with further research and consideration outside of a formal NCS debate. This input was used to shape the 2023 NCS "Democratic Process and Delegate Voice" discussion topic. Delegates are encouraged to bring forward their ideas in delegate webinars before NCS and during the discussion itself.

While important, some submissions were not included as stand-alone topics due to NCS time constraints and other considerations, including:

- WAGGGS Compass 2032's Collective Vision "to Build an Equal World Where All Girls Can Thrive" and Challenge "to Become a Girl-Led Movement"
- Quality and Relevancy of the Girl Scout Badge Programs and Journeys
- Joining Together to Maximize Girl Scout Resources
- Inclusion of Gender Expansive Youth in Girl Scouts
- Offering families with multiple members a sliding scale of reduced membership fees

GSUSA and Girl Scout councils are working in partnership to address topics related to gender expansive youth, membership fee structures, and maximizing Girl Scout resources across councils. Additionally, at NCS the Expo Hall will have opportunities to learn more and offer feedback on how the Girl Scout experience must continue to evolve reflecting girls' changing needs. Gathering together to consider and act on ideas that will improve the Girl Scout Movement is one of the most important outcomes of any National Council Session and convention.

Moving Forward

Together, we will continue to ensure our delegates are informed and engaged (rather than instructed) well in advance of our time together in Orlando. Please start planning now for your council delegate education and engagement efforts. These will be complemented by Movement education and engagement sessions on discussion topics/proposals, the Stewardship Report, National Board and National Board Development Committee slate and how to best use our standing rules for an effective meeting.

The [delegate website](#) is the source for all NCS delegate communications where regular updates will be shared, including virtual education opportunities for delegates. Your support in reminding delegates to check and use the website is appreciated.

We are shaping Movement delegate education and engagement plans now and will share an updated calendar of events via the delegate website. Resource teams comprised of Movement volunteers, council staff, GSUSA team members, and external advisors will be key contributors in developing discussion topic and proposal content as well as responding to delegate inquiries before NCS and during deliberation.

Thank you for your leadership and the recognition that an effective, collaborative National Council Session supports our shared commitment to champion girl ambition and prepare girls for a lifetime of opportunity and leadership.